

JAS 352: Japanese Linguistics: Analyzing the Grammar of Japanese

Year: 2024

Credit: 3.00

Semester: Spring

Class time/day: 15:30 – 16:45 Tu, Th

Classroom: B203

Faculty: Hitoshi HORIUCHI

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Office: A3-12

Office hours: 13:00 – 16:00 F or by appointment

Course Description:

Japanese Linguistics: Analyzing the Grammar of Japanese is a linguistic exploration of Japanese grammar, centering on the syntax and morphology of the language. It provides students with scientific concepts and methods that help them analyze the structures and the formation rules of sentences or words in any language. Based on such concepts and methods, students will be asked to explain the structure and formation of particular sentences and words used in the Japanese language with pen and paper.

The course covers various topics related to linguistically or typologically characteristic, grammatical phenomena or constructions in Japanese such as case marking by particles, honorifics, passive or causative constructions, and the nature of topic marker 'wa'. Since both native speakers and non-native learners of Japanese seem to be interested in considering these topics, this course is open to all undergraduate and international students.

Each group of students can deepen their knowledge and improve their skills of analysis through collaboration in this course as follows. Undergraduate students who are native speakers of Japanese have already acquired linguistic competence in the language. They must have learned the language unconsciously but can judge if a given expression is grammatical or not. This ability of grammatical judgment could be an essential resource for grammatical analyses and be shared by international students through collaboration with undergraduate Japanese students. The international students must have no linguistic intuition about Japanese, and they can view the language from another perspective objectively. This alternative view of the language could be an important clue for new directions in grammatical studies and shared by undergraduate Japanese students through collaboration with

international students.

Objectives:

By the end of the course successful students should be able to:

1. analyze syntactic structures of sentences in the Japanese language by drawing tree diagrams or related representations.
2. generalize or explain grammatical rules or principles based on their observation and description of linguistic behavior of grammatical items of Japanese.
3. improve their skills in logical argumentation.

Textbook(s):

Tsujimura, Natsuko. 2014. *An Introduction to Japanese Linguistics [Third Edition]*. Wiley Blackwell. **☐ Sorry, but this book is out of print. We will use a digital copy of some parts of it.**

References:

- Kroeger, Paul R. 2005. *Analyzing Grammar*. Cambridge University Press.
- Kroeger, Paul R. 2004. *Analyzing Syntax A Lexical-functional Approach*. Cambridge University Press.
- Kuno, Susumu. 1973. *Structure of the Japanese Language*. The MIT Press.
- Shibatani, Masayoshi. 1990. *The Languages of Japan*. Cambridge University Press.
- Tsujimura, Natsuko. (ed.) 1999. *The Handbook of Japanese Linguistics*. Wiley Blackwell.
- Kishimoto, Hideki. 2020. *Analyzing Japanese syntax: A Generative Perspective*. Hituzi Syobo.

Assessment:

Class Participation: 25%

Homework assignments: 25%

Quizzes: 25%

Presentation: 25%

Expected academic background:

No background knowledge of linguistics is required, but it is desirable to have taken an introductory course in general linguistics like ENG180. All students are expected to have academic interests in studying Japanese grammar scientifically. It is preferable for international students to have a basic knowledge of Japanese which roughly corresponds to JPL 310 or above.

Policies & remarks:

(1) Regarding class participation, students are expected to attend more than 70% of class meetings and actively participate in discussions, since class discussions are designed to improve their skills of logical argumentation. Missing more than 30% of the class meetings will affect the grade severely. If they have to miss classes for some reason, they must contact the instructor in advance and turn in an official letter that verifies the reason for the absence.

(2) Exercise assignments are to be submitted by the due dates. Incomplete or sloppily done assignments will receive only partial or no credit. Late submissions will be given no credit. (3) In accordance with AIU policies and good practices in higher education, acts of academic dishonesty such as plagiarism, cheating, and forgery (on a paper, examination, test, or other assignments) will result, at a minimum, in the failure of the course. An act of academic dishonesty during the final examination or assignment in lieu of the final examination will result in failure of all courses registered in the relevant academic term. Cases of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Dean of Academic Affairs for relevant action.

Class schedule: The detailed schedule will be given in class.

1. Orientation: What is grammar? What is Linguistics?
2. Morphology: Parts of speech,
3. Morphemes, Morpheme Types, and Word Formation
4. Syntax: Constituent Structure, Phrase Structure Rules, and Recursion
5. Syntax: Limits of PS-rules (Transformation and Lexicon)
6. Syntax: Case Marking
7. Syntax: Scrambling
8. Principles and Parameters Approach
9. Syntax: Reflexives
10. Syntax: Passives
11. Syntax: Causatives
12. Syntax: Relative Clauses 1
13. Syntax: Relative Clauses 2
14. Information Structure: Topic and Focus
15. Student Presentations

AILA Elements

● Interdisciplinary Aspects and Connections

Languages spoken by human beings are called ‘natural’ languages since they have arisen or emerged as a tool for human communication spontaneously, but not created as an artifact with a specific purpose. Just as scientists study materials or phenomena that exist in nature, linguists study languages that exist in the world. Languages could be sound waves for physicists or engineers, biologically endowed programs or neuronal activities in the brain for biologists, neuroscientists, or cognitive psychologists, mathematical, logical, or computational models/systems for mathematicians, philosophers, or computer scientists, socio-culturally and historically diverse symbols for anthropologists, sociologists, and historians, and creative media or tools for literary scholars. To capture these interdisciplinary aspects and connections, this course will employ some empirical scientific methods or hypothesis testing methods for analyzing the grammar of Japanese, just as natural sciences like physics, chemistry, or biology, and social or behavioral sciences like economics and psychology do. Linguistics could also help us resolve practical issues in the real world, which are related to artificial intelligence or natural language processing, speech therapy, (foreign/second) language learning/teaching, criminal investigation, etc.

● Holistic Personal Development

International students can develop and deepen their knowledge of Japanese systematically and scientifically by themselves. Japanese students can view their unconsciously/subconsciously acquired languages from a different perspective in an objective manner through introspection or grammatical judgment of the data. Both international and Japanese students can develop their intercultural and multilingual communication skills through collaborative activities and group discussions in class or for final projects. All students can develop general reasoning skills for logical argumentation and master a scientific way of thinking through linguistic research experiences.

● AILA Activities and Projects

- Activities through corpus data and digital tools: On the second day of each week, students are asked to perform various tasks related to the application of some learned grammatical concepts or analyses to practical problems in related fields like language learning/teaching, translation, literature, etc., by using a variety of corpus data or digital tools for linguistic analyses.
- Final group presentation: A group of students chooses a practical issue of grammatical analysis as

a topic related to their own interests such as language learning/teaching, translation, literature, business, law, politics, natural language processing, etc. Each group is asked to gather data, analyze them, solve the problem, and present the result of the research.

Sample topics:

- Pedagogical/Practical grammar of X (How to teach/learn X) in teaching/learning Japanese as a second language
- On the so-called problematic Japanese (問題な日本語) or grammatical changes and language policy in Japan
- On some problems of translation between English and Japanese
- Grammatical characteristics of Hideo Levy (リービ英雄)'s writings · Grammar of honorific expressions in business communication with Japanese people · How to rewrite legal documents in Easy Japanese (やさしい日本語) · Grammatical complexities of politician's language in the Diet record (国会会議録) · Problems of machine translation in Japanese: Using a Google Translate · Problems of current AI language tools: Chat-GPT 4